

REMARKS

In response to the Advisory Action mailed January 7, 2008, Applicant has amended claim 21 to remove the improper antecedent reference for the recitation of "said groove" in claim 21, line 8 and to eliminate the positive inclusion of the pipe to which the pipe coupling is to be connected, and has further amended claim 21 in order to provide further clarification distinguishing the amended claim over the prior art of record. Additionally, claim 26 has been amended to remove an improper antecedent reference.

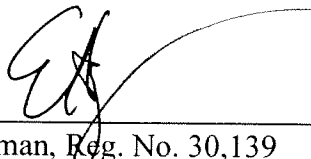
In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that claims 21-40 patentably define the subject invention over the cited references of record, and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would be useful in moving the case forward, he is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR, & ZAFMAN LLP

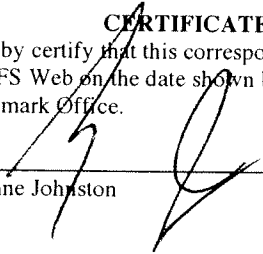
Dated: March 18, 2008

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being submitted electronically via EFS Web on the date shown below to the United States Patent and Trademark Office.


Suzanne Johnston

3/18/08
Date